

Kedoshim**Holy Ones (Rosh Chodesh Iyyar)****Torah:** Lev. 19:1-20:27**Holiness equals obedience**

(1) 19:3: "Each of you shall respect his mother and his father and observe my Sabbaths. I am YHVH – backwards 10 commandments, where mother mentioned before father and no exceptions first of fourteen pronouncements of YHVH in this portion (plus three, plus one – 14 orders, three in the midst of punishments, and one that describes why we need to be holy – chai)

(2) 19:11: "You shall not rip off, you shall not engage in lying or deceit with one another." You cannot be holy in your devotional life and a creep in your daily life.

(3) 19:15: "You shall not commit sin in your judgments – you shall not take the poor person's side, neither shall you favour the rich, you shall judge your neighbour according to righteousness."

(4) 20:26 you shall be holy for me, for I am holy, I, JHVH; I separated you from the peoples in order that you would be mine." Being His means being holy – making choices and dealing with problems.

Haftarah: Ez. 22:1-16 (A) Ez. 20:2-20 (S)

(5) 20:7: "I said to them, let each of you reject the abominations which catch your eye and do not defile yourselves by the idols of Egypt. I am YHVH your G-d." There was trouble in Egypt, yet He delivered them

(6) 20:12: "I gave them also my Sabbaths as a sign between me and them, in order that they would know that I am JHVH who sanctifies them." G-d knows we are defiled and hurting – He gives us His Sabbaths as times of renewal, because obedience that comes out of renewal enables us to change and stay changed – to get clean and stay clean.

Brit Chadashah: Matt. 5:43-48 (L & F)

(7) 5:48: "Be therefore perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect" Not in power and sinlessness, but in compassion and forgiveness and in rest.

Kiddush Levanah: At the conclusion of our siddur service, I want to read portions from the Art Scroll Siddur, pp. 289-293 Although this ceremony is usually done at the conclusion of the Sabbath, I want to include elements of it here, because our recognition of the paradox of life is reflected in the cycles of the moon – consistently changing, yet never altering in its course. Three thoughts: First of all, the majesty of creation points to the Creator: "We may note that as science unfolds more and more of the vastness of the universe, the presence of the Creator becomes more and more obvious to one who wishes to see; indeed to deny Him is ludicrous." Second of all, the sanctification of the new moon is often associated with greeting or longing for the shechinah (glory of G-d), because the only way we can recognize (see, feel, experience) the existence of G-d in this life is through His creation. We are not always conscious (aware) of G-d's glory – at least once a month, we stop, glance up and acknowledge the glory we can only catch a glimpse of in this life.

Third, the coming of the new moon is associated with the coming of Messiah, because one day, He will announce the Messianic age, and cast aside all barriers – in the mean time, He knows where we are and what is going on in our lives and continues to shine and to renew us, until that glorious day.

Sermon: **The First Truth: What the Bible is All About:**
Rom. 1:16; Deut. 29:29; I Tim. 2:5

The Bible is not a complicated book with a difficult message. It is an old book with lots of details – it was written in at least five dialects of Hebrew (Mosaic, Samuel, Davidic/Solomic, Exilic, Post-Exilic), with some Aramaic and Greek thrown in.

It is not a work of philosophy to prove G-d or His commandments. It is a spiritual diary of a people, to show us how to walk with G-d, if we so choose. It teaches five truths that are found in all major religions and gives us details about reality which we cannot discover elsewhere – science can tell us how and when, but not who and why.

(1) Where we came from Creation by one G-d. Ps. 19:1. Why were we created? Deut. 29:29 and Lev. 19 to be holy and to rest

(2) Why we screwed up because we disobeyed Ez. 18:20 – we did not have to, but we chose to. Is it over? Does G-d judge and destroy all mankind? Not yet (2 Peter 3:5-10)

(3) our second chance (the flood) He has intervened and does intervene – not to take away our choice, but to call us back to two things – to our choices and to our consequences. We are on a generational, genetic pilgrimage, as people and as a species. Our job is to do the best we can where we are and wait for the final judgment, where everything will be sorted out.

(4) What we have to do to fix up what we screwed up I Tim. 2:5. It is simple. To be forgiven, we have to ask for it. What about those who do not understand and have not heard? – I will deal with that in depth on May 24th – here I want to say, we need to follow our conscience, as the initial stages of seeking G-d (John 3:16-21). If you don't listen to yourself, you will not listen to G-d. There are good people all over the world, and there are bad people in churches and synagogues. We have to admit we screwed up, ask for forgiveness, and let Him clean us up and teach us how to live, how to be good- **you have to be good to get better.**

(5) What happens when we die. Well first of all, you're dead and your choices are over, but your consequences follow you (I Cor. 4:5 and Eccl. 12:14 [15 in French]) and there will be a judgment over which you have no control. It ain't over when you die, whether you like it or not.

Conclusion:

Cosmic insanity means three things (1) you deny where you came from (2) you deny why you are here and (3) you deny what is going to happen after you die.

Simple, straight forward, and not hard to understand. Do you acknowledge where you come from? Have you discovered why you are here? Are you ready for what is going to happen to you after you die?

Next week: The Second Truth: What our lives really say